

# econnections



July 2005

The electronic newsletter of MoDOT District 4, Kansas City Area

## MEETINGS/TRAINING

### Thursday, July 7

Resident Engineers meeting, 8:30-11:30 a.m., Room 255

Maintenance Superintendents meeting, 12:30-3 p.m., Room 136

### Friday, July 8

Missouri Highways & Transportation Commission, Jefferson City

### Tuesday, July 19

Stock Area Team, 8 a.m.-10 a.m., 87th Street facility

### Tuesday, July 19

Interstate 470/Strother Road interchange public meeting, 5-7 p.m., Lee's Summit North High School, 400 NE Douglas Street

### Wednesday, July 20

Job Status, Group 4, 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Job Status, Group 2, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Job Status, Group 3, 12:30-1:30 p.m.

Job Status, Group 1, 1:30-2:30 p.m.

### Thursday, July 21

Directional Team, 9-11:30 a.m., Boardroom

### Thursday, July 21

Management Team, 1-3 p.m., Boardroom

## EVENTS

### Saturday, July 16

District 4 Spring Motorcycle Ride; leaves from the District Office at 9:15 a.m. and will ride over the new Missouri River bridges at Lexington and Waverly. Call Misty Zingsheim at 622-6302 for details.

### Saturday, July 16

MoDOT District 4 Night at I-70 Speedway; gates open at 5 p.m., races begin at 7 p.m. Final RSVP and money due to Misty Zingsheim by July 11; call her at 622-6302 for details.

## New Missouri River Bridge Opens June 25



Hundreds of Ray and Lafayette County residents celebrated the opening of the new Route 13 Missouri River bridge on June 25. They met in the center of the bridge (top left photo) shortly before 10 a.m., when District Engineer Beth Wright (top right) gave local officials the three-second warning to cut the ribbon. After the scissors snipped and ribbon was cut and distributed for souvenirs (right), vehicles caravanned to the old Route 13 bridge in Lexington for a final trip over the 80-year-old structure. MoDOT crews moved in to close the old bridge immediately following the event (below). The new bridge will become the Congressmen Ike Skelton Bridge on Aug. 28, when a bill naming the structure for Skelton takes effect.





## News from Across the District

**District 4 to State Fair on Aug. 19:** Pat Rath, who coordinates District 4's State Fair participation, reports that D4 personnel will host the MoDOT displays on Friday, Aug. 19. A large pool of potential volunteers applied to work at the event, and eight volunteers were chosen at random on July 1.

The volunteers will be divided into two four-person teams that will work a half-day shift at the displays in the Transportation Exposition Center within the Highway Gardens.

Rath said the fair is an excellent opportunity to share the department's mission and messages with MoDOT's customers.

"Most of the displays in the Expo Center will be developed and set up by Central Office staff, but there's an area set aside to display district-specific information and items," she said. Departments or individuals wishing to prepare displays should contact her for more information.

**Condolences:** Our prayers are with Michelle Nelson of the Regional Counsel's office; retiree Dennis Kenslow; and Ted Dewolf, signal and lighting electrician. Michelle's father-in law died May 29. Dennis' wife passed away June 1. Ted's father passed away June 3.

**Bloody good show:** The Community Blood Center had 30 registrants and collected 26 units during its June 21 visit to District 4 headquarters.

**Camp and Float Trip:** The Activities Committee has scheduled a weekend float trip along the Elk River near Noel, Mo. Aug. 12-14. The \$32 per-person cost includes two nights of camping and a one-day river float. Special rates for children under 10 are available. The group will leave D4 offices at 4:30 p.m. Friday, Aug. 12. Contact Misty Zingsheim at 622-6302 by July 15 to make your reservation.

**Back-tax Legislation Awaits OK:** Central Office Human Resources Director Micki Knudsen told the Employee Advisory Council at its May meeting that the legislation dealing with employees' requirement to file income tax returns has been revised.

"Two years ago a law was passed that says all state employees must file their required tax returns and pay their taxes as a condition of continued employment with the State of Missouri," Knudsen said. "This year, legislators revised it slightly so that, if signed by the governor, state employees who owe state income taxes are required to pay the back taxes they owe through payroll deduction."

The bill awaits Gov. Blunt's signature.

**Congratulations** to Michelle Nelson, legal assistant in the Regional Counsel's office. She and her husband, Russ, welcomed Emma Violet into their family on June 28. Their daughter weighed 7 pounds, 6 ounces, and was just more than 20 inches long.



**Motorist Assist Operator Lee McAllister** chats with students from the **Kansas City Summer Transportation Institute** who have been inspecting the bed of McAllister's truck. Students visited District 4 on July 5.



**Reed Brunk** stirs a paste made from rock dust to demonstrate a test for elasticity in the **Materials Lab**, to the delight of **Kansas City Summer Transportation Institute** students.



**Crews working at the I-435/Route 350 interchange** noticed this sign posted by a grateful neighbor as the project wrapped up in early June.

## Corporate Ladder

### Welcome to District 4

**Assistant construction technician**  
Terry Babbitt

**Senior traffic systems operator**  
Chantay Baker

**Construction inspectors**  
Brandon Cracraft, Lucas Kaspar  
and Zachary Walker

**Construction technician**  
Corey Hansen

**Traffic engineering specialist**  
Jessica Hutton

**Crew worker**  
William Landsman

**Shop mechanics**  
Gabriel Sammon and Steven Young

**Highway designer**  
Juan Yin

### Promoted

**Intermediate construction technician**  
Alan Cadwallader

**Intermediate crew workers**  
Lloyd Crawford and  
Randall Easley

**Senior crew worker**  
Elmer Gillespie

**Senior clerk**  
Nancy Lancaster

**Senior traffic systems operator**  
Sandra Meagher

**Construction technician**  
Brady Watson

## Porter's Work Makes National Airwaves

*Editor's Note:* The following essay was written by Senior Community Relations Specialist Steve Porter (right). It was selected from more than 3,000 entries submitted to National Public Radio's "This I Believe" series, and was aired during the June 20 Morning Edition broadcast. Porter recorded the essay at KCUR's Kansas City studio.

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I believe in the 50-percent theory. Half the time things are better than normal; the other half, they are worse. I believe life is a pendulum swing. It takes time and experience to understand what normal is, and that gives me the perspective to deal with the surprises of the future.

Let's benchmark the parameters: Yes, I will die. I've dealt with the deaths of both parents, a best friend, a beloved boss and cherished pets. Some of these deaths have been violent, before my eyes, or slow and agonizing. Bad stuff, and it belongs at the bottom of the scale.

Then there are those high points: romance and marriage to the right person; having a child and doing those Dad things like coaching my son's baseball team, paddling around the creek in the boat while he's swimming with the dogs, discovering his compassion so deep it manifests even in his kindness to snails, his imagination so vivid he builds a spaceship from a scattered pile of Legos.

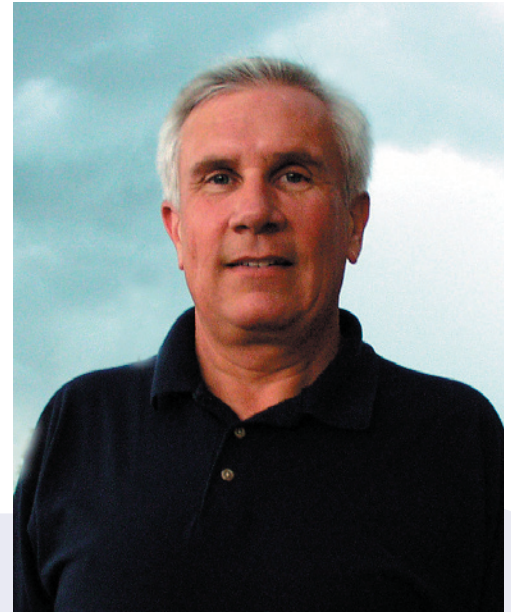
But there is a vast meadow of life in the middle, where the bad and the good flip-flop acrobatically. This is what convinces me to believe in the 50-percent theory.

One spring I planted corn too early in a bottomland so flood-prone that neighbors laughed. I felt chagrined at the wasted effort. Summer turned brutal — the worst heat wave and drought in my lifetime. The air-conditioner died, the well went dry, the marriage ended, the job lost, the money gone. I was living lyrics from a country tune — music I loathed. Only a surging Kansas City Royals team, bound for their first World Series, buoyed my spirits.

Looking back on that horrible summer, I soon understood that all succeeding good things merely offset the bad. Worse than normal wouldn't last long. I am owed and savor the halcyon times. They reinvigorate me for the next nasty surprise and offer assurance that I can thrive. The 50 percent theory even helps me see hope beyond my Royals' recent slump, a field of struggling rookies sown so that some year soon we can reap an October harvest.

Oh, yeah, the corn crop? For that one blistering summer, the ground moisture was just right, planting early allowed pollination before heat withered the tops, and the lack of rain spared the standing corn from floods. That winter my crib overflowed with corn — fat, healthy three-to-a-stalk ears filled with kernels from heel to tip — while my neighbors' fields yielded only brown, empty husks.

Although plantings past may have fallen below the 50-percent expectation, and they probably will again in the future, I am still sustained by the crop that flourishes during the drought.



### econnections sources

**Construction** Bev Chrisco, 6341

**Design** Flo Noear, 0455

**Regional Counsel** LeAnn Francis, 6382

**Administration** Judy Magruder, 6309

**General Services** Toni Terry, 0050

**Human Resources** Belinda Fite, 6321

**Maintenance** Pat Rath, 0420

**Materials** Shana Blaylock, 6525

**Right of Way** Melbra Taylor, 6351

**Traffic** Dawn Phillips, 0401

**Editor** Jennifer Benefield, 6328

# Smooth Roads Initiative

490 centerline miles of the Kansas City Area's busiest roadways in good condition by Dec. 2007

## Progress to Date



***Smoother, Safer, Sooner***  
***Amendment 3***

### Tons

1,184,276 \_\_\_\_\_  
986,897 \_\_\_\_\_  
789,518 \_\_\_\_\_  
592,139 \_\_\_\_\_  
384,760 \_\_\_\_\_  
197,381 \_\_\_\_\_

14,218 tons

**Tons of asphalt**

### Miles

490 \_\_\_\_\_  
408 \_\_\_\_\_  
326 \_\_\_\_\_  
244 \_\_\_\_\_  
162 \_\_\_\_\_  
80 \_\_\_\_\_

1 mile

**Striping**

### Square Yards

30,000 \_\_\_\_\_  
25,000 \_\_\_\_\_  
20,000 \_\_\_\_\_  
15,000 \_\_\_\_\_  
10,000 \_\_\_\_\_  
5,000 \_\_\_\_\_

16,517sq.  
yds.

**Pavement repair**

### Miles

490 \_\_\_\_\_  
408 \_\_\_\_\_  
326 \_\_\_\_\_  
244 \_\_\_\_\_  
162 \_\_\_\_\_  
80 \_\_\_\_\_

0 miles

**Reflectors**

### Square Yards

329,602 \_\_\_\_\_  
274,668 \_\_\_\_\_  
219,734 \_\_\_\_\_  
164,800 \_\_\_\_\_  
109,866 \_\_\_\_\_  
54,932 \_\_\_\_\_

0 sq. yds.

**Ultrathin-bonded wearing surface**

### Square Feet

60,000 \_\_\_\_\_  
50,000 \_\_\_\_\_  
40,000 \_\_\_\_\_  
30,000 \_\_\_\_\_  
20,000 \_\_\_\_\_  
10,000 \_\_\_\_\_

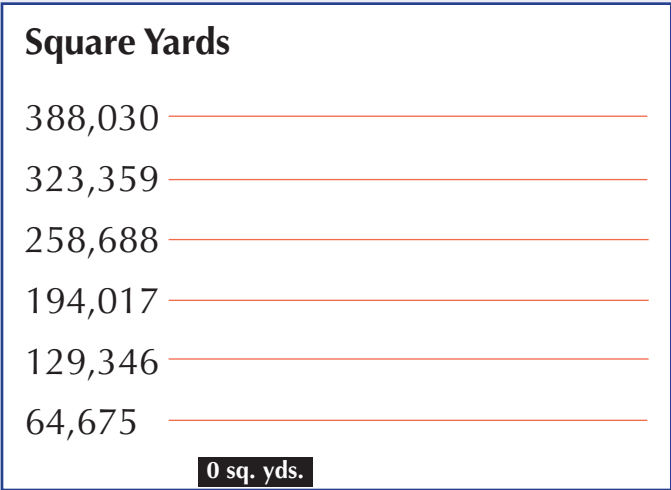
11,492  
sq. ft.

**Signs**

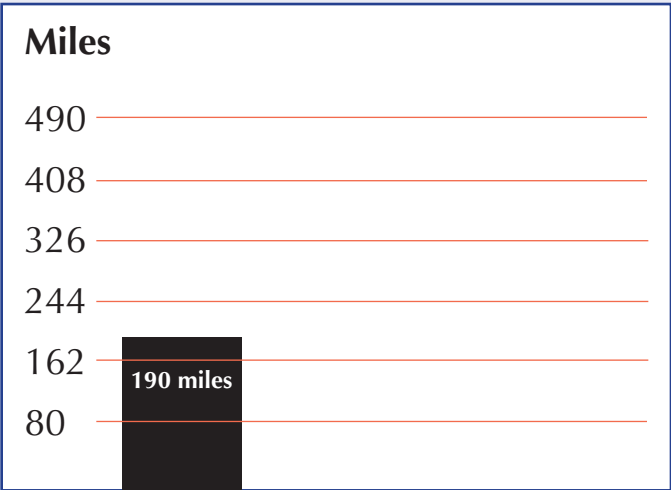
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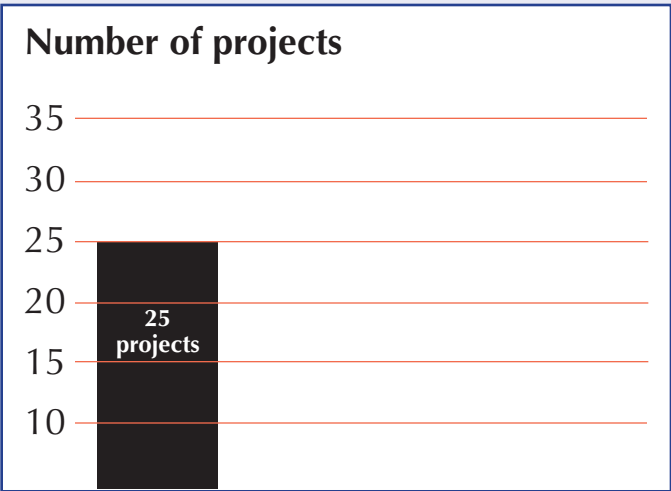
## Progress to Date



Diamond grinding



Clear zones cleared



Projects designed